



**CHARLES** The Second, by the Grace of God King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. To all and singular Archbishops, Bishops, Archdeacons, Deans and their Officials, Parsons, Vicars, Curates, and all other Spiritual persons: And also to all Justices of the Peace, Mayors, Sheriffs, Bayliffs, Constables, Church-wardens, Chappel-wardens, Collectors for the poor, and their Overseers: And also to all Officers of Cities, Boroughs, and Towns Corporate: And to all other Our Officers, Ministers, and Subjects, whatsoever they be, as well within liberties as without, to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting: *Whereas* We are credibly given to understand, as well by the humble Petition of the Church-wardens, and poor distressed Inhabitants of the several Parishes of *St. Saviours*, and *St. Thomas*, in the Borough of *Southwark*, in the County of *Surrey*, as also by a Certificate made at the General Quarter-Sessions of the Peace, held for our said County of *Surrey*, at the Town of *Gylford*, on Tuesday, the Eleventh day of July last past, under the Hands of Our Trusty and Well-beloved Sir *Adam Browne*, Baronet, Sir *William Moore*, Baronet, *Arthur Onslow*, *Anthony Thomas*, *Roger Duncanson*, *George Evelyn*, *James Gresham*, *Roger James*, *George Vernon*, *Stephen Harvey*, *Thomas Barker*, and *James Reading*, Esquires, Justices of Peace for Our said County, That upon Friday, the Six and Twentieth day of May last past, about Four of the Clock in the Morning of the same day, there happened a sudden and most dreadful Fire in the said Borough of *Southwark*, which broke out so violently and furiously, that within the space of eighteen hours, notwithstanding all endeavours that could be used for the quenching of the same, it burnt to the ground and consumed the Dwelling-houses and Habitations of above five hundred Families, together with great Breaches and Damages done to the Parish Church of *St. Saviours* aforesaid, and the loss of the Free-School and School-house, which was also burnt and totally consumed; the loss sustained thereby amounting to the value of Fifty eight thousand, three hundred seventy five pounds, and upwards, as appeared to Our said Justices of the Peace, by the Oaths of *William Mason*, and *Samuel Bridges*, Bricklayers, *William Gray*, and *Thomas Kentish*, Carpenters, experienced and able Workmen, besides the loss that was thereby sustained in Goods, Wares, and Household-stuff, amounting to the value of Twenty six thousand pounds, and thirteen shillings more; so that the whole loss doth amount unto the value of Fourcore and four thousand, three hundred seventy five pounds, and thirteen shillings; and also the loss of many great and considerable Fines paid for Leases of the said Houses; together with other great losses of several persons not included in the said sum, by reason whereof, the said poor Sufferers are so impoverished and distressed, that they are not able to support themselves under so lamentable and heavy pressures, unless assisted by the charitable benevolence of well-disposed Christians: And therefore they have most humbly besought Us, that We would be graciously pleased to take into consideration their present lamentable and distressed condition, and to grant unto them Our Gracious Letters Patents, under Our Great Seal of *England*, to license and authorize them to ask, and receive the Alms and charitable Benevolence of all Our loving Subjects, within Our Kingdom of *England*, Dominion of *Wales*, and Town of *Berwick upon Tweed*; not doubting, but when their sad and afflicted condition shall be made known to Our said loving Subjects, they will bountifully contribute thereunto: We therefore commiserating their sad and distressed condition, being Our self in person a sorrowful Spectator of that dreadful Fire, and saw the best of means used to prevent the spreading thereof, have condescended to their humble request, and do recommend the distressed and deplorable condition of the said poor Sufferers to the pious and charitable thoughts and considerations of the said loving Subjects, desiring that these Our Letters Patents may not be looked upon as an ordinary Brief, but do recommend the sad condition of the said distressed Sufferers, as a very fit Object for their liberal Alms and charitable benevolence. *Know ye therefore*, That of Our especial Grace and Princely Compassion, We have given and granted, and by these Our Letters Patents under Our Great Seal of *England*, do give and grant unto the said poor Sufferers, and to their Deputy and Deputies, the Bearer and Bearers hereof, (authorized and deputed in that behalf, as afterwards in these Presents is appointed) full power, license, and authority, to ask, gather, receive, and take the Alms and charitable Benevolence of all Our loving Subjects, not only Householders, but also Servants, Strangers, and others, in all and every the Counties, Cities, Towns, Cinque Ports, Towns Corporate, Universities, Boroughs, Priviledged Places, Parishes, Chappelries, Villages, Hamlets, and all other places whatsoever, within Our Kingdom of *England*, Dominion of *Wales*, and Town of *Berwick upon Tweed*, for and towards the support and relief of the said poor Sufferers, and reparation of the said Parish Church, and Re-building of the said Free-School. *Wherefore* We require and command you, and every of you, that at such time and times, as the Deputy and Deputies, and the Bearer and Bearers hereof, shall come or repair to any your Churches, Chappels, Congregations, or other places, to ask and receive the Alms and charitable Benevolence of Our said loving Subjects, quietly to permit and suffer them so to do, without any manner your lets or contradictions; but to be aiding and assisting to them therein: And you the said Parsons, Vicars, and Curates, upon some Lords-day, within a Month or six Weeks at the farthest after that these Our Letters Patents shall be produced, and the true Copies thereof tendered unto you, or the said Church-wardens or Chappel wardens respectively, and before the expiration of these Presents, deliberately and affectionately to publish and declare the tenor of these Our Letters Patents, unto Our said loving Subjects, and earnestly to exhort, persuade, and stir them up, to extend their liberal Contributions in this behalf: And you the said Church-wardens, Chappel-wardens, Collectors for the Poor, and their Overseers, to Collect the Alms of Our said loving Subjects: And for the better and more effectual collecting thereof, you the said Church-wardens, Chappel-wardens, Collector for the Poor and their Overseers, assisted by the respective Ministers within the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, and the Weekly Bills of Mortality, and in all other Cities, Corporations, Market-Towns, Parishes, Villages, Hamlets, and all other places whatsoever, within our Kingdom of *England*, Dominion of *Wales*, and Town of *Berwick upon Tweed*, are to go from house to house upon the Week-days next following after the publication of these Presents, to collect the Alms of Our said loving Subjects, and the sum and sums of money so respectively collected by virtue of these Presents, to endorse upon these Our Letters Patents, or the said Copies, in words at length and not in figures, together also with the names of the Counties, Cities, Towns, Parishes, and Chappelries respectively, wherein and the time when such sums are gathered; as also in another Writing to be signed as aforesaid, to express the several Names and Qualities of the respective Givers, Donors, and Benefactors, within the said several Cities, Universities, Towns, Parishes, Chappelries, and Priviledged places, and the sums by them respectively given: And you the said Church-wardens, Chappel-wardens, Collectors, and Overseers for the Poor, within Our said Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, and the Weekly Bills of Mortality, are hereby required to deliver such Briefs so endorsed, and such Catalogue of Benefactors so had and taken, within Our said Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, and the Weekly Bills of Mortality, together with the Money which shall be collected by virtue hereof, unto Our Trusty and Well-beloved Sir *Joseph Sheldon*, Knight, Lord Mayor of the City of *London*, and the Lord Mayor of *London* for the time being, Sir *Thomas Gould*, and Sir *John Shorter*, Knights, Sheriffs of Our said City, and the Sheriffs of Our said City for the time being, or any two or more of them, whom We do hereby appoint to be Receivers of all such Moneys, as shall be so collected by virtue hereof, as aforesaid, in trust, to be disposed as is herein after expressed, and whose Acquittance or Acquittances shall be your sufficient discharge for so doing: And you the said Church-wardens, Chappel-wardens, Collectors for the Poor, and their Overseers, in all other Our Cities, Towns, Villages, Hamlets, and places whatsoever, within Our Kingdom of *England*, Dominion of *Wales*, and Town of *Berwick upon Tweed*, not herein before otherwise appointed, are hereby required to deliver such Briefs so endorsed, and such sums of Money, with all such Copies and Writings as shall be respectively by you made, gathered, and collected to the respective Mayors, High Constables, or other Head Officers, in whose Division you are; which said Mayor, High Constable, or other Head Officer, unto whom the same shall be delivered, as aforesaid, are hereby required safely to pay and deliver the same Moneys and Papers unto the Bearer and Bearers hereof, (authorized as herein is appointed) whensoever you shall be by them or any of them thereunto required; whose receiving thereof, together with their or any of their Acquittance or Acquittances shall be your sufficient discharge: Which said Bearer and Bearers hereof, are hereby willed and required, upon receipt of the said Monies, forthwith to pay the same, and deliver all the said Copies and Writings, unto Our Trusty and Well-beloved *John Appleby*, Esquire, *James Reading*, *Richard How*, *John Freeman*, *Peter Rich*, *William Castle*, Esquires, Justices of Peace for Our said County, and *Joseph Day*, Gentleman, or any two or more of them, whom We do hereby appoint Receivers of such Moneys as shall be so collected by the said Bearers hereof, which said receivers for *London* and *Westminster*, and the Weekly Bills of Mortality, as also the receivers for all other places, within Our Kingdom of *England*, Dominion of *Wales*, and Town of *Berwick upon Tweed*, are hereby required upon receipt of the said Monies, forthwith to pay the same, and deliver all the said Copies and Writings unto Our Trusty and Well-beloved Cousin and Councillor *William Earl of Craven*; Our right Trusty and Well-beloved *George Lord Barkley*; and to Our Trusty and Well-beloved Sir *Adam Browne*, Baronet, Sir *Thomas Bloodworth*, Knight, Sir *Edmond Bowyer*, Knight, whom together with the said Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of *London*, and also the said *James Reading*, *Richard How*, *John Freeman*, *Peter Rich*, *William Castle*, *John Appleby*, and *Joseph Day*, Receivers as aforesaid, or any three or more of them, We do hereby appoint to be Treasurers and Disposers of the said Moneys so Collected by virtue hereof; of which number We will that you the said *James Reading*, *Richard How*, *John Freeman*, and *Joseph Day*, shall always be one: And that the said Treasurers and Disposers, or any three or more of them, as aforesaid, shall (taking to their Assistance, the Ministers and Church-wardens of the aforesaid Parishes) distribute all the said Moneys, which shall be so Collected by virtue hereof, amongst the said poor Sufferers, and towards the repair of the said Church, and Re-building of the said Free-School, and School-house, as to them shall seem just and equal. And lastly, Our Will and Pleasure is, that no person or persons whatsoever, shall collect or receive the said Moneys, of or from the said Mayor, High Constable, or other Head Officers, or any of them, but such only as shall be authorized and appointed so to do, by Deputation in Writing, under the Hands and Seals of the said Trustees and Disposers, or any three or more of them, as aforesaid: Any Law, Statute, Ordinance, or Provision, heretofore made to the contrary notwithstanding. In witness whereof, We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patents, and to continue from the date hereof, until the Feast of *St. Michael the Archangel*, which shall be in the Year of Our Lord God One Thousand Six Hundred Seventy and Seven, and no Longer. Witness Our self at *Westminster*, the Fourteenth day of August, in the Eight and Twentieth Year of Our Reign.

GOD SAVE THE KING.